

The magic of the spoken word

By James Farrell, Optimal Hospice Care Bereavement Counselor

Did you know we are living in the future? Think about it and look at all of the everyday technology we use. The other night I was watching videos on Facebook and I came upon a video where a young man who had been deaf from birth was about to hear sound for the first time with the help of modern technology. What an amazing moment and I was part of it through a small screen. See, we are in the future! Now back to the previously mentioned video.

The video opened with a lady working with a hearing device. She asked the young man, "Once I turn this on, what is the first thing you want to hear me say?" His response was, "I want to hear my name." The young man goes on to explain that he feels almost like he hasn't had a name because he has never heard it. This got me thinking, how often do we speak the names of our loved ones who have died?

When was the last time you heard their name?

When was the last time you spoke their name?








I want you to audibly speak their name right now.

How many memories flooded your mind by the simple utterance of their name? What did you see in your mind's eye? Did it transport you to another place and time? Did it cause goosebumps or bring tears to your eyes?

As I mentioned earlier, we are in the future. But if we look to the past, long before recording devices or even the written language, traditions, history and memories were passed on through the spoken word. I believe the spoken word has more power than we realize, especially with all the distraction that we have with today's technology. I'll be the first to admit that I'm guilty of choosing text messages over phone calls or even meeting others face to face. Sometimes we need to turn off the devices, gather with those we love and cherish the opportunity to talk. We should talk about those who we no longer have with us physically. When we speak their name and we speak of them something magical happens. They are still here, still with us.

With the holidays quickly approaching I want to encourage you to take the time to speak your loved one's name; tell stories, share memories, laugh and cry — it is OK to do both. This approaching season may not be easy but hopefully their name will help you through it. Rest in the memories of the years past and

A few ideas to continue to honor your loved one's name:

-  Take part in an Optimal Hospice Foundation Light Up A Life Celebration
-  Attend or volunteer at an event to support a specific cause
-  If you attend a Walk, Run or other event make sure you and your team dress up and make it obvious who you are there to honor (think of matching t-shirts that a family would wear)
-  Donate a bench at a park and have a plaque with your loved one's name inscribed on it
-  Share stories with younger family members that may not have known your loved one as closely as you
-  Keep their Facebook page active and share memories or thoughts as they come up
-  Use mykeeper.com, a free online memorial and tribute, to honor your loved one's legacy

The spoken word,

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Maverick's cousins sport t-shirts celebrating him at a Mushball tournament played in honor of his birthday.

honor traditions that involved them or create new ones in the name of your loved one's memory.

Dale Carnegie once said, "Names are the sweetest and most important sound in any language." Remembering our loved ones is a way the Optimal Hospice Foundation wants to support you in this holiday season. While we cannot recreate those personal memories, we do gather together to collectively remember those who are no longer here.

Each December the Foundation hosts Light Up A Life Celebrations in communities throughout our service area. (The 2019 Celebrations are listed at the right.) The celebration includes a personal reflection by a hospice family

member, the reading of the memorial names by hospice nurses and volunteers, inspirational music and the lighting of our Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is adorned with ornaments representing a light in memory of loved ones and friends.

The Foundation would love to audibly include your loved one's name as part of the Light Up A Life celebration nearest to you. Light Up A Life information will be mailed to you the first week in November. To include your loved one please complete and return the card inside the invitation. To support our mission and programs we ask for a \$10 donation per name.

For more information about the Light Up A Life celebration nearest you please visit OptimalHospiceFoundation.com or contact the Foundation office at (661) 716-8000.

**"Names are the
sweetest and
most important
sound in any
language."**

— Dale Carnegie

OPTIMAL
HOSPICE FOUNDATION

Light Up A Life



Save the date for our Community Celebrations

Each year Optimal Hospice Foundation holds uplifting Light Up A Life celebrations to remember our loved ones and help to keep their memories alive as we enter into the holidays.

Light Up A Life information will be mailed the first week of November and also can be found on our website: OptimalHospiceFoundation.com

BAKERSFIELD

Wednesday, December 4, 6:30 p.m.
Bakersfield RV Resort,*
5025 Wible Road

FRESNO/CLOVIS

Thursday, December 5, 6:00 p.m.
Sierra Vista Mall Common Area*
1050 Shaw Avenue, Clovis

KERN RIVER VALLEY

Sunday, December 8, 5:00 p.m.
Kernville Circle Park,* Kernville

LA/ORANGE COUNTY

Thursday, December 12, 7:00 p.m.
Huntington Terrace
18800 Florida Street, Huntington Beach

MODESTO

Tuesday, December 10, 6:00 p.m.
Bethel Retirement Community, 2345 Scenic Drive

PORTERVILLE

Wednesday, December 4, 6:00 p.m.
Roger S. Good Cancer Center,*
456 West Putnam Avenue

STOCKTON

Wednesday, December 11, 6:00 p.m.
Oakmont Of Stockton, 3318 Brookside Road

TAFT

Thursday, December 12, 6:00 p.m.
The Historic Fort, 915 North 10th Street

TEHACHAPI

Saturday, December 7, 3:00 p.m.
Tehachapi Senior Center, 500 East F Street

VISALIA/TULARE/HANFORD

Tuesday, December 3, 6:00 p.m.
Café 210, 210 Center Avenue, Visalia

* Outdoor/partially outdoor event

Optimal Cares Halloween Car Show



Presented by



Saturday, Oct. 26
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



at the Bakersfield RV Resort
5025 Wible Road, Bakersfield, CA 93313

**Open to ALL Vehicles
Including Motorcycles**

For event sponsorship, entry and vendor
information, call the Foundation office at
(661) 716-8000,
email cshoemake@optimalcares.com
or visit
www.OptimalHospiceFoundation.com.

100% of net proceeds benefit Optimal Hospice Foundation

Thank you Garden Wine Tasting Sponsors and Patrons

The 4th Annual Optimal Cares Wine Tasting event, held Saturday, June 1 at the home of Tim and Millie Byers, raised over \$10,000 to support the Foundation's mission.

Guests enjoyed delicious food and wine and were treated to the sounds of The Macey Blue Band, who donated their time and talent for the evening.

Thank you to all of the sponsors, donors, attendees, vendors and volunteers that made this event a huge success.

For information regarding our 2020 event please contact Cherie Shoemake at 559-320-8000 or cshoemake@optimalcares.com.

Hope Sponsors

The Law Offices of Phillip M. Flanigan/Quality Life Solutions
The Wine Group
Byers Accountancy - Tim & Mille Byers (Venue)

Spirit Sponsors

The Windham • Yost & Webb Funeral Home

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Station Sponsors

Cedar Creek Senior Living • Sequoia Home Health

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Atria Senior Living • Carmel Village at Clovis Assisted Living • Cedarbrook Memory Care • Jimmy Wen's • Lazy Dog Restaurant & Bar • Oakmont of Fresno • Press Box Sports Grill • Somerford Place Fresno • Tamari Robotayaki & Whisky Bar • Casa Corona • Cedar Creek Assisted Living • Jersey Mike's/Herndon & Fowler

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Pear Valley Vineyards • Quady Winery • Prosperi Farms • Tobin James Cellars • Steve & Stacey Pressley • Debra Fenton • Gallo Wines • The Wine Group • Ursa Major Stearns/HPN Global

Golf in the Sun & Under the Stars

The 28th Annual Golf In the Sun & Under the Stars Tournament presented by Greenlawn Funeral Homes was held on Friday, September 13, 2019, at Stockdale Country Club. **THANK YOU** to all of our sponsors, donors, players and volunteers who helped us raise over \$25,000 to further our Mission.

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Thank you Kids Camp sponsors and donors



Your generosity helps provide children ages 6 to 16 who have experienced the death of a loved one the opportunity to find healing and peace. While at camp, kids play games, do activities and meet others who are "just like them."

The 2019 camps were held in July and August at Gergen Ski Ranch, Camp Oakhurst and the Taylor Family Foundation at Camp Arroyo. Thank you sponsors, donors and volunteers for helping to provide this opportunity for our campers!

Thank You for Your Support

The following individuals and organizations generously contributed to Optimal Hospice Foundation from January through June 2019. On behalf of the patients and families we serve, thank you for your support.

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Thank you to our generous Employee Giving Campaign donors who are listed annually in the Spring Newsletter.

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FOUNDATION LOCATIONS

FOUNDATION OFFICE

1227 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301
661.716.8000

COMMUNITY OFFICES

Bakersfield

1675 Chester Avenue, #401
Bakersfield, CA 93301
661.716.4000

Kern River Valley

6504 Lake Isabella Blvd, #E
Lake Isabella, CA 93240
760.379.5038

Fresno

6780 North West Avenue, #101
Fresno, CA 93711
559.320.8000

Lancaster

44151 15th Street West, #201
Lancaster, CA 93534
661.674.3301

Long Beach

5000 East Spring Street #525
Long Beach, CA 90815
562.735.8687

Modesto

1101 Sylvan Avenue, # B-10
Modesto, CA 95350
209.338.9000

Stockton

2800 West March Lane #110
Stockton, CA 95219
209.670.8040

Visalia

2439 West Whitendale Ave., #B
Visalia, CA 93277
559.334.5120

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1227 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(661) 716-8000

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Support groups available through Optimal Hospice Care

These groups are open to the public and offered free of charge.

BAKERSFIELD

Tuesdays 10–11:30 a.m.

Thursdays 6–7:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
4600 Stockdale Hwy., Room 4
(661) 716-4000

Counseling available en Español

FRESNO

Mondays 3–4:30 p.m.

Fairwinds – Woodward Park
9525 Ft. Washington Rd.
(559) 320-4000

Counseling available en Español

HUNTINGTON BEACH

Group Sessions Offered

Call for information
Huntington Terrace Assisted Living
18800 Florida St.
(562) 494-7687

LAKE ISABELLA

Thursdays 1–2:30 p.m.

Optimal Hospice Care Office
6504 Lake Isabella Blvd., Ste. E
(760) 379-5038

LANCASTER

Counseling available

Call for information
Optimal Hospice Care
44151 15th Street, Space 201
(661) 674-3300

MADERA

1st & 3rd Wednesdays 2–3:30 p.m.

Cedar Creek Senior Living Center
500 N. Westbury Blvd.
(559) 320-4000

2nd & 4th Wednesdays 3–4:30 p.m.

Counseling en Español
Madera Rehabilitation & Nursing
517 South A St.
(559) 320-4000

MODESTO

Group Sessions Offered

Call for information
Optimal Hospice Care
1101 Sylvan Ave., Ste. B-10
(209) 338-3000

PORTERVILLE

2nd & 4th Thursdays 11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Sierra Hills Retirement Center
2500 West Henderson Ave.
(559) 741-7220

Counseling available en Español

SEAL BEACH

Group Sessions Offered

Call for information
Sunrise Assisted Living
3850 Lampson Avenue
(562) 494-7687

STOCKTON

Group Sessions Offered

Call for information
Optimal Hospice Care
2800 West March Lane #110
(209) 670-8000

TAFT

1st & 3rd Wednesdays 1–2:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church
220 North St.
Boardroom
(661) 716-4000

TEHACHAPI

Tuesdays 1:30–3 p.m.

Tehachapi Senior Citizens Center
500 East F St.
(888) 597-6115

VISALIA

2nd & 4th Tuesdays 3–4:30 p.m.

Prestige Assisted Living at Visalia
3120 W. Caldwell Ave.
(559) 741-7220

Counseling available en Español

YOUTH GRIEF SUPPORT

Bakersfield, Fresno, Modesto,
Stockton and Visalia

Call area numbers
for details.

Optimal Cares
Halloween
Car Show

October 28

See page 3 for details

